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Shelf. *B 87 V 5*
1888

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



By
M. Sears Brooks,
Illustrated by
Mrs. W. M. Copeland.

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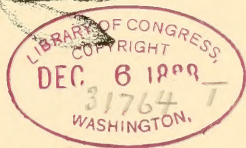
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A. M. B., Sept. 25, 1920.

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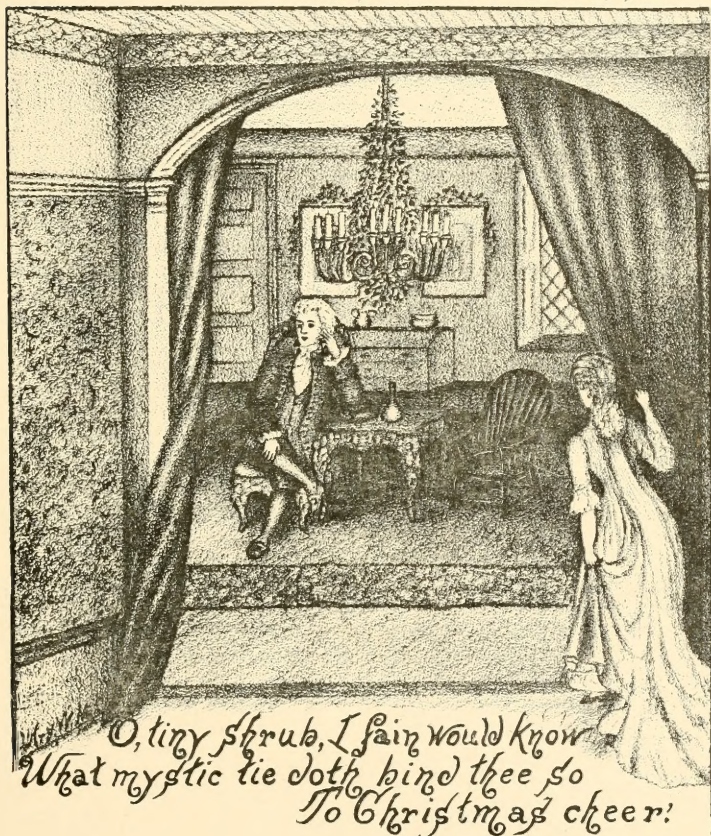
Note.
In the Norse legend the
youth Balder is slain by
the Mistletoe, becomes immortal,
and it is believed will reappear
after Ragnarok, or end of all
things. Thence the Druids adop-
ted this shrub as the emblem
of immortality, calling it the
All-Heal. — a shadowy type
of the more perfect Christian
revelation. — M. B. B.



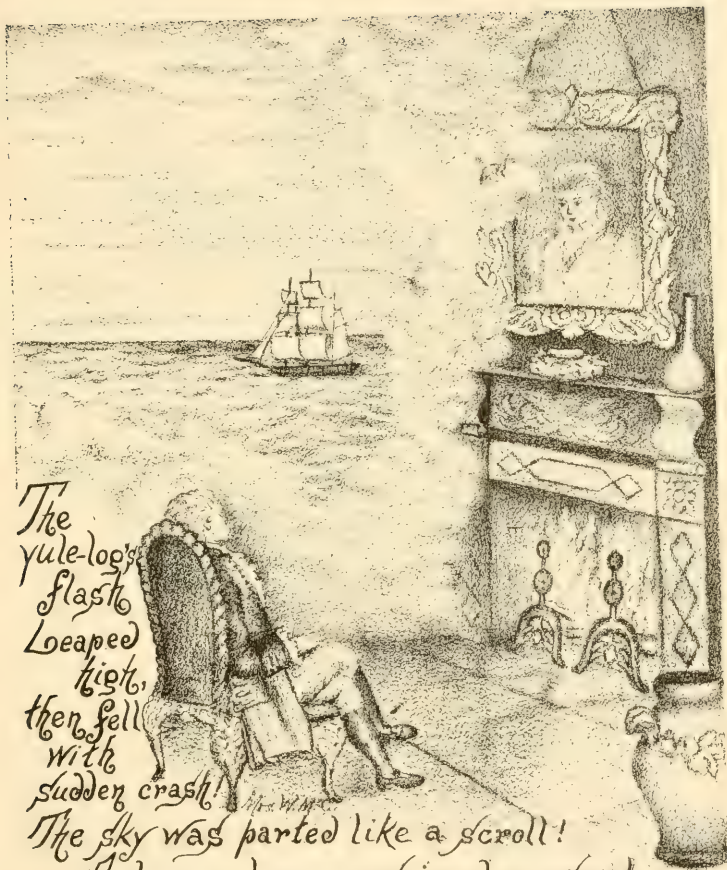


Again the
Christmas-tide drew near,
The wintry sky—the waning year;
Again the mistletoe was seen
With waxen stems of yellow green,
Its pearly berries glistening white
As sea-gems worn by ocean sprite.

A fair girl's hand above my head
Had placed a spray. I musing, said:



O, tiny shrub, I fain would know
What mystic tie doth bind thee so
To Christmas cheer!

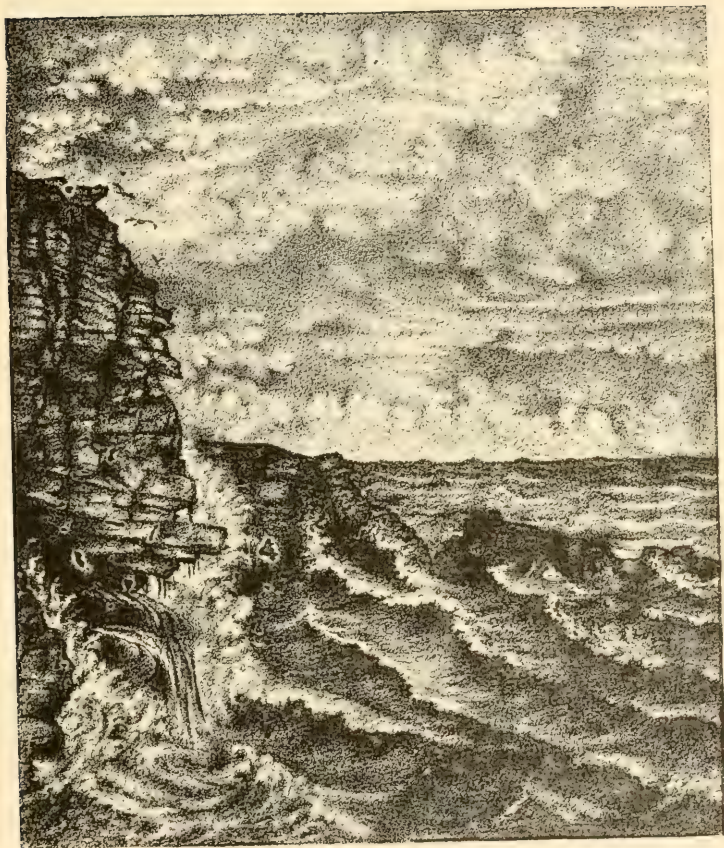


The
yule-log's
flash
Leaped
high,
then fell
with
sudden crash!

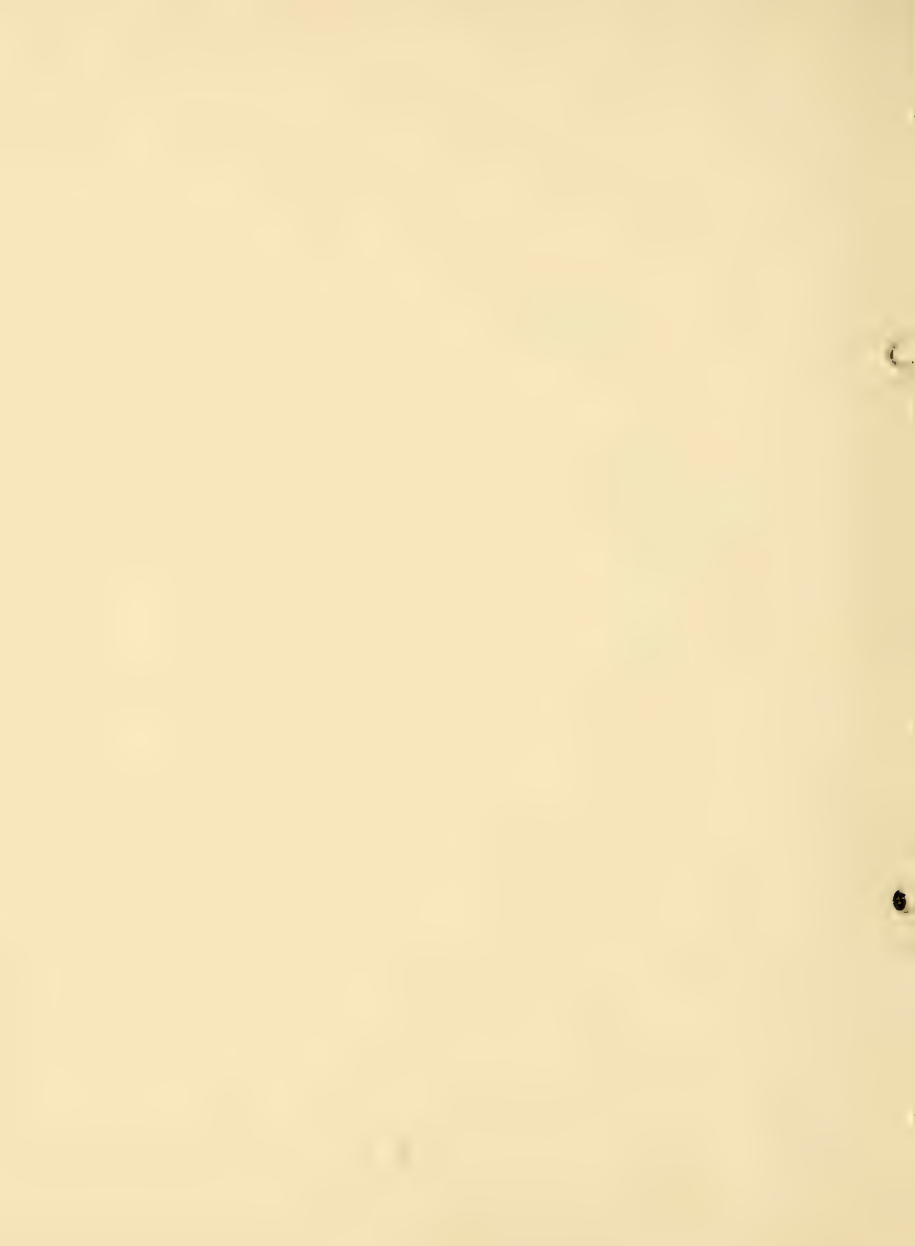
The sky was parted like a scroll!

A dreamy languor seized my soul,

And over land and sea I passed

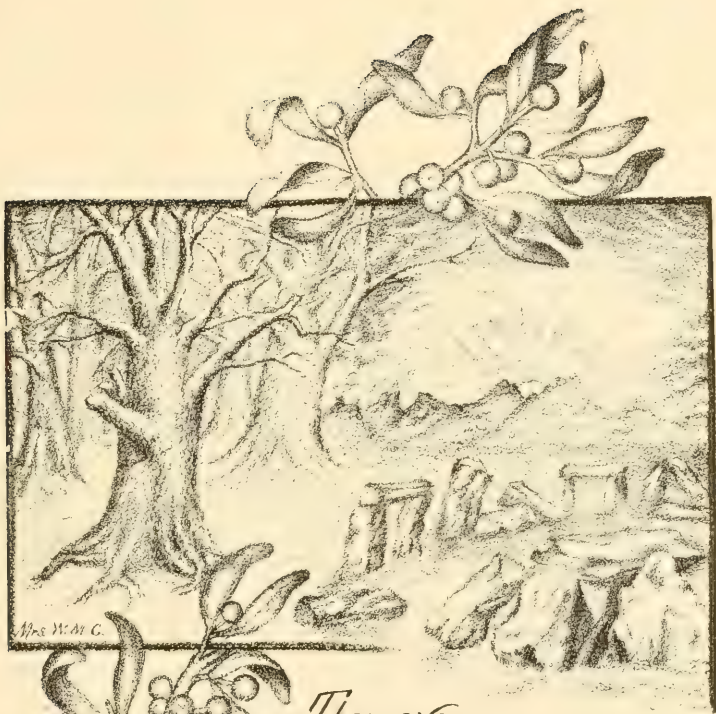


Until I felt the cold keen blast
From Scandinavia's rock bound coast.





Where walks the far-famed *Baldur's* ghost.
And then a voice, now low, now wild,
Swept through the blast like sobbing child,
'Till faint in mist, and fog, the moan
Was lost in silences unknown.

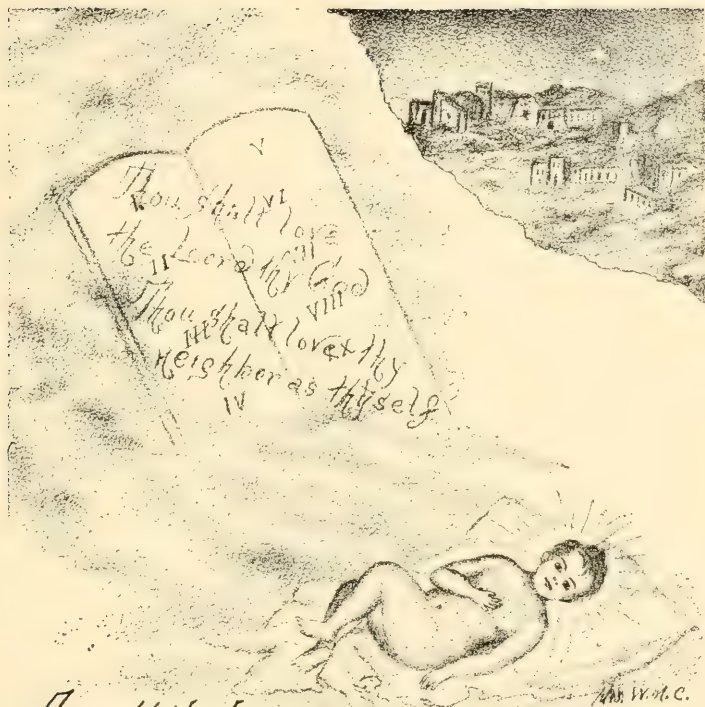


Then over
fen and moorland wild,
I sped, until a
Druid's pile
Of circling stones with hoarfrost white
Lay sparkling in the dawning light.

Beneath the gnarled oak's sacred boughs
 A white robed priest with holy vows
 Held far aloft the golden blade
 With which the sacrifice was made.



"Hear all ye people," thus he cried,
 "The great All-Neal I now divide,
 Its leaves to all the nations give,
 'Tis life immortal. Live, O Live."



Across the heavens resplendent shone
 A trembling star. I stood alone.
 The priest was gone; and then I saw
 The stony tablets of the Law
 Recede, grow dim, then fade away
 Incarnate where the Christ-child lay.

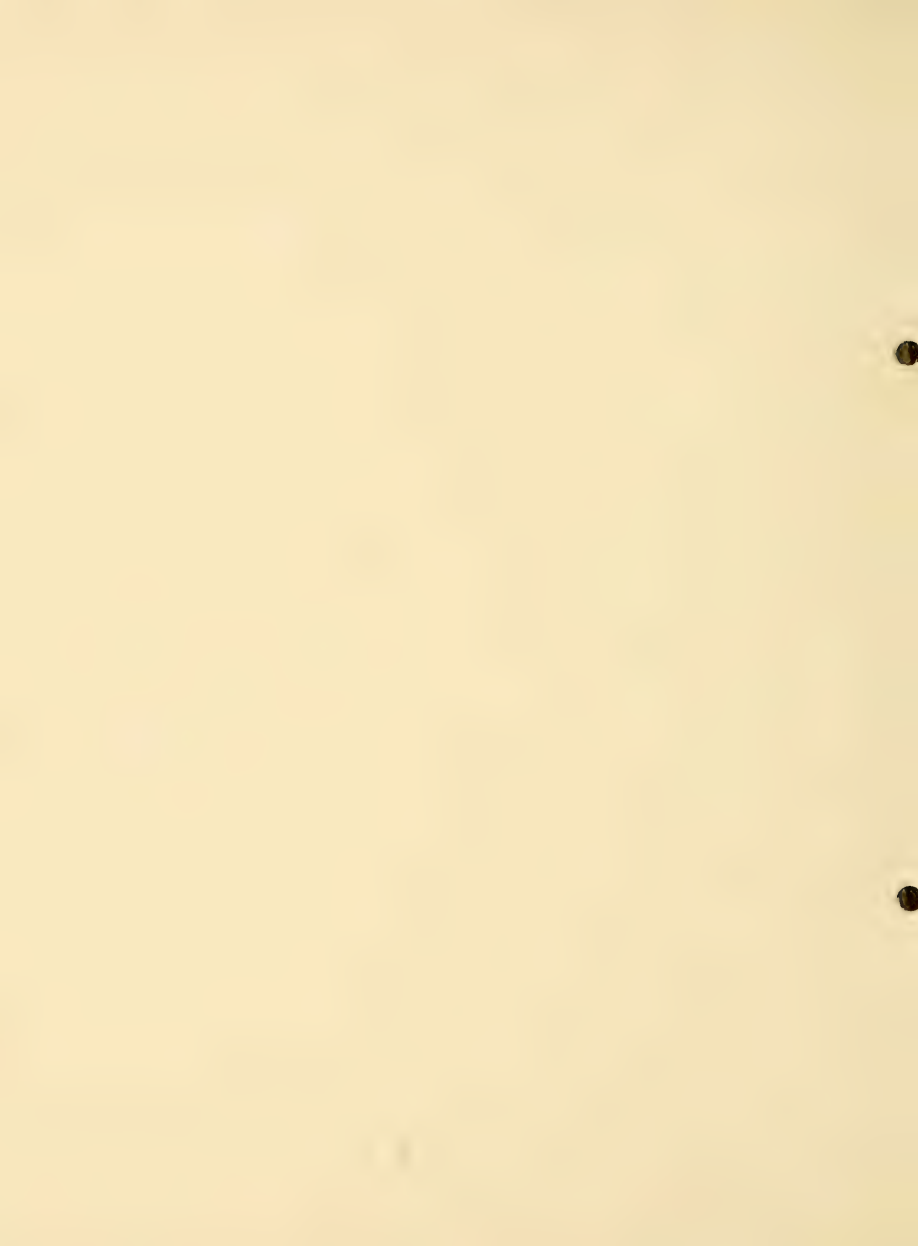


The angel by my side stooped low
And laid the spray of mistletoe
Among the Magi's gifts of gold.



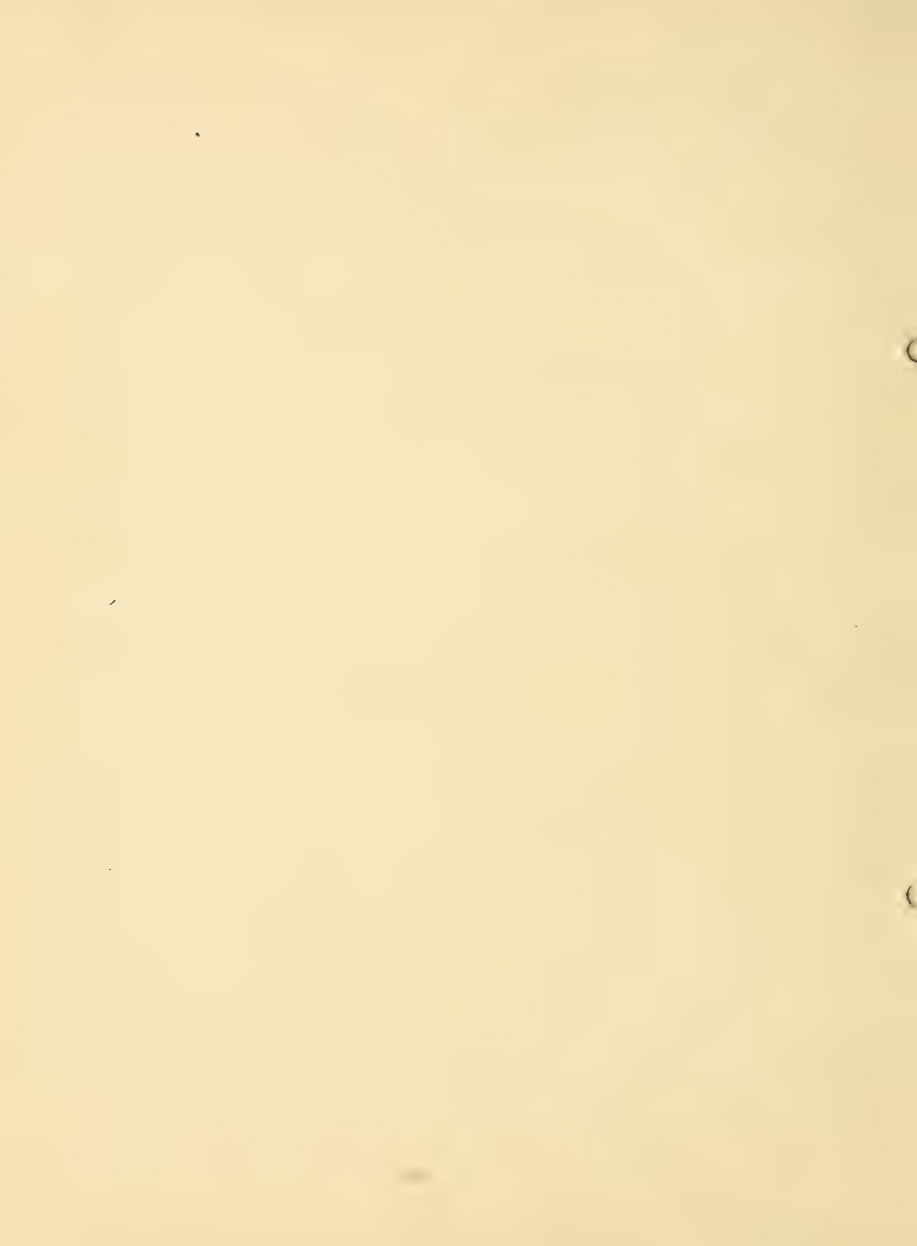


Then sang the morning stars: "Behold
The Way, the Life." A naked tree
Stretched forth its arms whereon were three
Poor malefactors doomed to die.
And one was Lord of earth and sky.





The angel cried:
"Forevermore
My gift shall live. The tree he bore
Shall be with mystic verdure drest,
The symbol of its Holy Guest."





The vision
passed.

Long years
have fled.

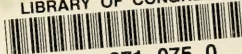
No mistle bough
hangs o'er my head.
The fire burns low.
A fair girl's hand
Is beck'ning o'er
the golden strand

For me tonight. 'Tis Christmas-tide,
And all the earth seems glorified,
While Life Immortal seems to glow
Where once she hung the Mistletoe.





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